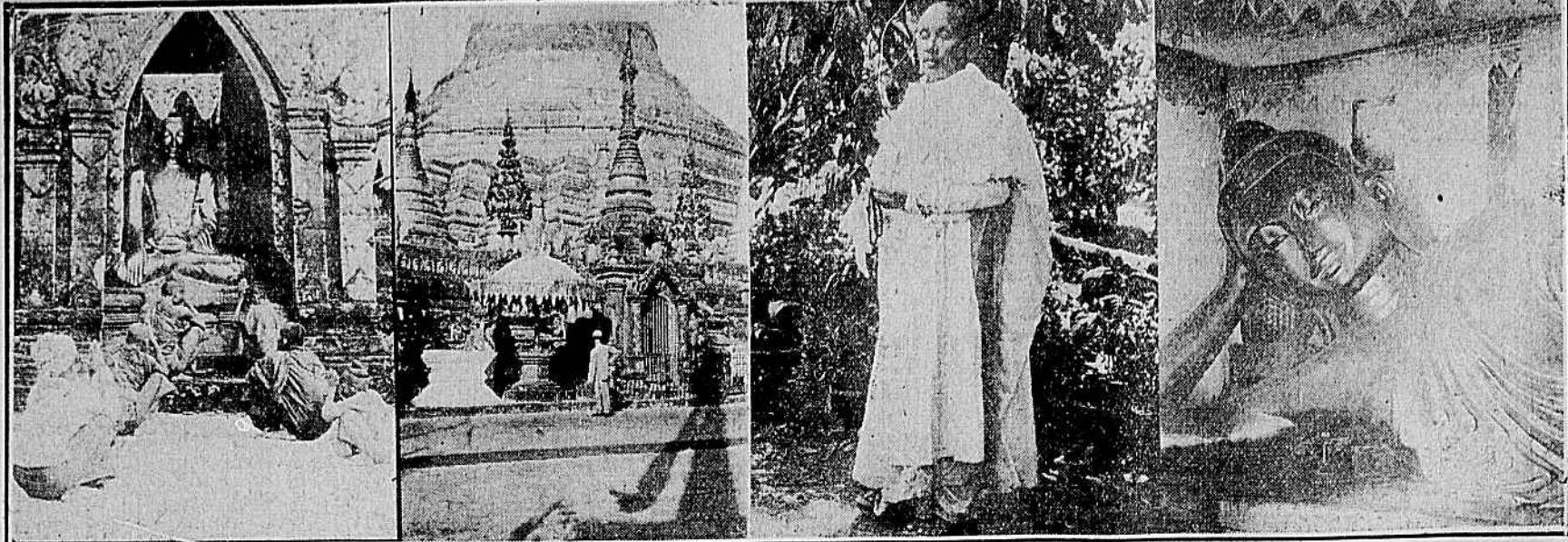


Ashes of Buddha--Authentic Relics 2,400 Years Old in Casket of Crystal--How Earl Minto Gave Them to Burma



150,000,000 human beings believe in the Buddhist religion.

Earl Minto suggests a pagoda for Buddha. This is placed with gold.

Under the Bo tree, a suggestion of Buddha's Gaya, where the Great Prophet was tempted and received enlightenment.

The Golden Sleeping Buddha of Siam, the largest of the world's idols. It is 150 feet long and its arm is as big around as a flour barrel.

BY FRANK G. CARPENTER.

Calcutta, 1910. The Buddhist religion is on the eve of a revival. The movement has already made some headway in Japan, Korea and China, and it is having a great impetus here and in Burma through the discovery of the ashes of Buddha, which were recently found in a buried chamber near Peshawar. The prophet was born here in India more than 2,400 years ago, and he is said to have died in northern India at the age of eighty. There is no doubt as to the authenticity of the relics. They were found by the archeological department of the British government, and the viceroy of India, Earl Minto, has had them brought here to Calcutta and has made a formal presentation of them to a delegation of Buddhist priests from Burma.

The relics were discovered through investigations made by ancient writings which described their existence. They lay in a chamber far down under the ground below the heavy foundation of a tower which had long since been blotted from the face of the earth. They were in a bronze casket and inside a crystal box, and they consisted of a mass of grayish white powder and four charred human bones. The box was first carried to Siam, and it is now on its way to Burma. It probably will be kept at Mandalay and a mighty pagoda erected above it.

Earl Minto's Speech. In making his speech to the priests the viceroy said:

"The government of India has decided that the relics should remain within the confines of the Indian empire, and that Burma, as a Buddhist province, and Mandalay, as its capital, should provide for their safe custody. I am sure that the great honor done to Burma will be thoroughly appreciated by its people, and that the relics will be carefully preserved and cherished."

The viceroy concluded with this statement, which seems remarkable, as coming from the Christian ruler of India, the King of England's greatest subject. He closed:

"I trust, too, that a suitable shrine may be erected at Mandalay over these relics, where in future years devout pilgrims may gather from all parts of the world to do honor to the memory of the great founder of their religion." The ceremony connected with the presentation of the relics was impressive. It occurred in the throne-room of the vice-regal palace, the floor of which was covered with rich golden carpets. The lieutenant-governor of Burma was present, and among the spectators were Lady Minto, Mrs. Anna Besant and the highest officials of India.

The Ashes of Buddha. Suppose the Christian world of today could have authentic information of the discovery of some of the bones and ashes of St. Peter or St. Paul? What a sensation it would create. Suppose, further, that they might have relics of the Saviour which were real beyond the shadow of a doubt? The whole civilized world would be excited.

about it. This is what has happened out here in India. Buddha is just as real to these people as Christ is to us, and they have now found this casket containing his bones.

During the presentation Mr. Marshall director of the archeological department of the government of India, described how the relics were found. The first information concerning them came from records left by Buddhist pilgrims who walked over India on pilgrimages about 400 or 500 years after Christ. One of these men was a Buddhist monk, who spent seven years in traveling through India collecting Buddhist writings and visiting the shrines. He camped across the Himalaya Mountains, stopping in the little province where Buddha was born. He walked to Buddha Gaya, where the saint received his great enlightenment, and then went to pray at the various places where the relics of Buddha were kept. In the records of his pilgrimage he described a great pagoda near Peshawar, not far from where the Emperor Kanishka had his palaces.

This tower was about 1,500 feet in circumference, and was higher than the Washington Monument. It had thirteen stories, and the top was crowned with a pinnacle of solid gold. Attached to it was a spiral staircase, which was said to have lasted for more than 300 years after the Chinese Buddhist monks had paid their visit. Their records stated that the relics of Buddha lay under the tower.

Discovered by a Frenchman. The origin of the discovery came from a French scientist who came to India a few years ago to study Buddhism. He had the writings of these pilgrims, and from them he located the site of the pagoda as being under one of two mounds which lie about a half mile east of the city of Peshawar. At that time there was no tower in existence. It had fallen to ruins centuries ago, and no vestiges were in sight excepting these mounds. The Frenchman's name was Foucher.

Mr. Foucher found himself unable to make the excavations required in his theory. He presented his evidence, however, to Dr. Spooner, of the archeological department of the Indian government, and the latter took up the work. That was two years ago. Since then the mounds have been dug over and the remains of the great tower uncovered, and it was shown to have been larger than any other known Buddhist pagoda. It was square, with massive walls of dressed stone, and, according to the records of Hsuen Chwang, the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, it was so lofty that four towers had to be built at the corners to hoist the coping stones into place. The remains of those towers have been found.

After the dimensions of the pagoda had been outlined, and the heavy foundation uncovered, the British archeologists sent a shaft down through the stone floor to a depth of

twenty feet, and came to the relic chamber described in the records. There, in that little stone-room, which had been buried from the sight of man for over 2,400 years, they found a bronze casket seven inches high and five inches in diameter.

It was round, and it had a lid, slightly curved at the top, made to represent a full-blown lotus, upon which a small figure of Buddha sat. Along the lid of the box which overhung was a frieze of flying geese, and lower down around the main body of the casket were figures of Buddha, beautifully carved, representing him in the different stages of his life. In the center of these was engraved a large standing figure of King Kanishka, the great Buddhist ruler and conqueror of the time the casket was made, and there were also inscriptions stating that the maker was the head engineer of this King.

Upon opening the casket a lump of rock crystal was found within. This had been hollowed out and for the reception of the relics it was originally sealed with clay, but the moisture had detached the seal, and the crystal, found lying at the side of the casket, bore the head of Kanishka where also was found. The government of India considers the relics as beyond any doubt genuine.

A Buddhist Relic. During my present trip around the world I have traveled extensively through the great lands of the Buddhists. I first stopped in Japan, where the more advanced followers of this religion are modifying their faith to suit modern civilization. They have a temple in Kyoto which has an income of \$200,000 a year, and in Korea found the missionaries of that church at work.

The Buddhists are adopting the same plans of propagating their faith as those used by us Christians. They have Buddhist Young Men's Associations corresponding to our Young Men's Christian Associations, and are now publishing tracts and distributing all sorts of religious documents. During my stay in India I visited one of the lamaeries outside Peking, where the Dalai Lama, who had come from Tibet, was stopping while engaged in conference with the high Chinese officials. While in Burma I inspected many of the Buddhist monasteries there, and talked with the high priests, and laid flowers upon the shrines of the Golden Pagoda at Rangoon. That pagoda is built over eight hairs which came from the head of the great Buddha, and its sanctity is surpassed only by that of the temple at Kanby, which contains Buddha's favorite tooth.

This tooth was brought to Ceylon more than sixteen centuries ago by a princess, who concealed it in her clothing. Since then it has been fought over and captured and recaptured during several wars, and it is now so holy that it is shown only with the consent of the government. The tooth looks more like the tooth of a crocodile than that of a man. It is a piece of ivory about an inch in diameter and as long as my little finger. It reposes on a lotus flower of pure gold under a nest of seven bells of gold set with jewels. People come from all parts of the Buddhist world to worship at this shrine; and it is said that a single pilgrim on one occasion laid 5,000,000 flowers upon it.

Next to Ceylon and Burma, I find that Siam is the chief Buddhist country of this part of the world. It has no relics of the saint, but the splendor of its temples beggars description. I visited one at Bangkok, which has a carpet of woven silver wire, and contains a little gold god set with emeralds and other precious stones. Bangkok has hundreds of figures of Buddha, plated with gold, and in one temple there I saw what is perhaps the largest idol of the world. It is a sleeping Buddha so heavily plated that it shines like a new wedding ring. It is 150 feet long, and its arms are as big around as a flour barrel.

Indian Buddhism. India should have more Buddhists than any other land. It was here that Buddha was born. Here he spent his whole life, and from here his religion spread to other parts of the world. To-day, of the 300,000,000 of India, not more than one in a thousand is a follower of Buddha. There are between 8,000,000 and 10,000,000 of that faith in Burma, and many more in Ceylon and parts of farther India.

The Buddhists of Hindustan number less than 300,000. They are found in small numbers along the northern frontier of Bengal and upon the lower slopes of the Himalayas. In Nepal, where Buddha was born, he has still many followers, and in Kashmir, near where these ashes were found, there are of his believers perhaps 40,000 all told.

The religion at first had great sway. It spread throughout Hindustan, and at the time of King Kanishka, who at the time of King Kanishka, who built the great temple over the ashes recently found, it was one of the predominant faiths. After that it began to decline, and it was almost wiped out at the time the Mohammedans came in and took possession of Northern India. To-day there are something like 150,000,000 Buddhists in the world, but their estimate is based upon figures which cannot be verified. The religion is the chief one of Japan, two-thirds of the Chinese are supposed to believe it, and its most ardent followers are Tibetans and the Mongolian people.

of Asia. There are Buddhists in Siberia and in the Dutch East Indies, and the faith is supposed to be alive in Korea, although the priests there are few and low and are despised and rejected of men.

In the Footprints of Buddha. During my present stay in India I have walked in the footprints of Buddha. I passed his birthplace on my way up the Himalayas. He was the son of a King who lived on the slopes in southern Nepal, and his boyhood was spent in the most beautiful scenery under the shadows of the highest mountains on earth. During the earlier part of his life he enjoyed such luxury as only Indian kings have. He was given every pleasure, was married to a charming princess and in due time had a beautiful son. During this period he was kept from the sight of all evil, sorrow and pain, for fear that his contemplative and ascetic nature might lead him to take to the church. It was not until he was almost twenty-nine years of age that he learned of the troubles of mankind and decided upon the great renunciation. He then gave up his palace, cut off his long hair, and putting on the clothes of a beggar went forth upon the highway. He spent six years in wandering about in his efforts for the attainment of peace. He practiced one religion after another; he fasted and prayed; he mortified the flesh in every way, and went through struggle after struggle and temptation after temptation, until at last, at Buddha Gaya, he found the light and went to Benares, where he first gave it to mankind.

Buddha Gaya is to the Buddhists the most holy spot upon earth. The Bo tree under which Buddha sat during his great contemplation, until at last, at Buddha Gaya, he found the light and went to Benares, where he first gave it to mankind. The Bo tree, which stands near the center of the earth, they believe will tell you that the original tree still stands and that branches of it have been carried to Ceylon and there sprouted. This tree is situated near a Buddhist temple, which is about seven miles from the little city of Gaya. It lies some distance south of the Ganges, 392 miles by rail from Calcutta, and is reached by way of Patna, where the great opium factories are. As the great flies it is about 125 miles from Benares.

The temple, which stands near the tree, was erected about 500 years after Buddha's death, and is hence about 1,300 years old. It is 150 feet high and the wall of its tower is fourteen feet thick. It is in the form of a pyramid of nine stories, embellished with niches and moldings. I have no space to speak of the tree or its surroundings. The shrines are chiefly in the hands of the Brahmans, although there are a few Buddhist monks who worship in a monastery nearby. They say their prayers before a beautiful statue of Buddha, which has been brought from Japan. Buddha Gaya has about 100,000 pilgrims a year.

The Great Temptation. It was on this spot that Buddha, according to a manuscript supposed to date from the third century before Christ, spent six years in penance and mortification of the flesh. During that time he sat cross-legged under the Bo tree fasting and praying. He became a living skeleton, and an object of contempt to the villagers about. They were tempted by both angels and devils. Legions of demons, some of which had thousands of heads, fought around him in vain. They threw poisoned arrows, but before they fell they were changed into flowers. In addition there were hordes of the most beautiful women from girlhood to maturity who tried to attract the saint by their charms. They tried every one of the two and thirty modes of making men fall, but they were powerless against Gutama Buddha, who had conquered and risen above all carnal desires.

In addition there were hundreds of other temptations of which this manuscript tells; but Buddha vanquished them all and came to perfection. After that he bathed himself in the river nearby and partook of food made for him by a village maiden from the milk of a thousand cows. His life revived and he straightway became whole. His course forth from Gaya was a triumphal procession, in which the gods and others took part. Flowers rained upon him, cool tanks of water sprang up by the wayside, and divine music was constantly heard.

From the Bo tree the prophet went forth to preach. He traveled over Northern India and continued preaching until B. C. 473 when he died at eighty years of age. Just where he died we do not know, but the ashes in the casket may indicate that it was somewhere in Northern India, not far from Peshawar. The unlikely story of his death was caused by eating too much pork.

Some Buddhist Beliefs. The Buddhist religion contains many beautiful things, but it has nothing of the worship of God as we know Him. It is practically atheistic, and is a religion of despair rather than hope. It considers personal existence a source of evil, and one of its theories is that the greatest evil of mankind is birth. Without that we could not have old age, misery and death, and we would not have to go through the long line of transmigrations by which man rises and descends to heaven or hell. According to Buddhism, one's soul, like that of John Brown, is always marching on. The moment he dies he is born again, his soul passing at once into the form of a man, a dog or some

other animal, or worse than all, into a woman. If he escapes the latter fate he may go down, down, down through the different degrees of animal life until he falls into one of the hundred odd Buddhist hells, which are in the middle of the earth, where the sufferers spend 10,000,000 years or more before they rise again. Or he may go upward to glory into better and better states, until he at last reaches the heaven, where the shortest life is 10,000,000,000 years. The Buddhist fairy stories tell how their great teacher lived as an elephant, as a camel, as a goat, as a swallow or an eagle. He went through every form of existence on the earth, in hell and in heaven, and when he attained the perfect knowledge he could recall them all. The Buddhist religion believes in cause and effect. It says that man's misfortunes all come from his bad actions, and all his good from his good ones. Heaven means the extinction of desires. This is the great end of life. To wipe out all passion, all feeling and even all ideas. It is a sort of a religious trance or ecstasy, known as the Nirvana.

Ten Commandments of Buddhism. The Buddhist religion has its ten commandments, which are taught to the children. The first five are:

1. Thou shalt not take any life at all.
2. Thou shalt not steal.
3. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
4. Thou shalt not lie.
5. Thou shalt not drink intoxicating liquors.

The second five are obligatory chiefly on the priests in the monasteries and by all other good people on holy days. They are:

1. Thou shalt not eat after mid-day.
2. Thou shalt not dance or play upon musical instruments.
3. Thou shalt not use cosmetics.
4. Thou shalt not stand or sleep on elevated places.
5. Thou shalt not touch gold nor silver.

The theory of the religion is that every one must work out his own salvation, and that no one can help another except by example.

Buddha Not a God. It is a mistake to speak of the worship of Buddha. He is not a god, but a teacher. His followers look upon him

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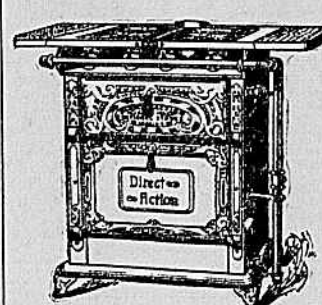
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as having been a mortal man, and they believe that any mortal may aspire to be what he was. He is their idea of the perfect man, and his life is the perfect life. Nevertheless, they pray before his shrine and use his name in their prayers.

And this brings me to the various methods of Buddhist praying. In most things these people are centuries behind the times, but as to their religion they have economized energy and added many inventions. You may remember the story of the American who had a beautiful prayer written out for him covering his every possible need. It was full of Christianity and brotherly love. He pasted it on the head of his bed and every night before jumping in folded his hands and reverently said: "Oh! Lord, them's my sentiments. Amen."

Well, that man was much like the Buddhists. They write out prayers on long scrolls which fit into round metal boxes attached to pivots to handles, so that when they give the handle a twist the box containing the scroll whirled around. They believe they get merit for the prayer at every whirl, and some of them keep their wheels whirling all day. In the Himalayas and Tibet are wheels of a similar nature worked by wind-mills and water-power, and, I doubt not, now that electricity is coming in, they will harness the lighting in their race toward salvation.

The Buddhists have no fixed services, no regular religious meetings and no religious forms of marriages or burials. Until recently they have had no regular preaching, although they are now holding services in Japan and elsewhere. They do not believe that any one but yourself can help you toward salvation, and it is only as reminders of the example of Buddha that their temples have been erected. (Copyright, 1910, by Frank G. Carpenter.)



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